

Report for:	Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel 9 th July 2015	Item Number:	
Title:	Work Programme Development		
Report Authorised by:	Bernie Ryan, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance		
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Ward(s) affected:	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions: All N/A		

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Developing an effective work programme is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well, it can help lay the foundations for targeted, inclusive and timely work on issues of local importance where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.
- 1.2 Throughout May and June a number of consultative processes have been employed to support the development of the scrutiny work programme with the final programme being agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 July 2015.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is to assist the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel in prioritising topics for inclusion in their work programme.
- 1.4 Scrutiny panels are non-decision making bodies. The work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each panel produces must therefore be approved by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- (a) That the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel consider those items outlined in section 8, and agree those to be prioritised for inclusion in the 2015/16 work programme.
- (b) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse (a) above at its meeting on 27 July 2015.
- (c) That in respect of the items agreed for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme the Chair of the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel meets with appropriate Cabinet members and senior officers to further clarify the work programme.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1 N/A

5. Background information

“Scrutiny is based on the principle that someone who makes a decision...should not be the only one to review or challenge it.”

“Overview is founded on the belief that an open, inclusive, member led approach to policy review...results in better policies in the long run”

(Jessica Crowe, former Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny)

Principles

- 5.1 Expending resources on investigating an issue via scrutiny requires clear justification yet there are often difficulties in prioritising work. Some of the problems in developing and maintaining an effective work programme include:
 - Agenda creep and losing sight of the key issues;
 - Diving into detail;
 - Focusing on minor points;
 - Going over old ground;
 - Lack of progress on identified issues;
 - Overlapping with the role of other committees;
 - Hobbyhorses;
 - Running out of time;
 - Political loyalty versus the independence of scrutiny.
- 5.2 To help overcome these barriers, the careful selection and prioritisation of work is essential if scrutiny is to be successful, gain buy in from senior officers and Cabinet, retain credibility and achieve added value.
- 5.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has identified a number of features in planning an effective scrutiny work programme¹, which include:

¹ A Cunning Plan: Devising a Scrutiny Work Programme, Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2011

- It should be a **member led process** (e.g. involvement of all non executive members, and members leading on the short-listing and prioritisation of topics – with support from officers)
- It should **reflect local needs, priorities and policies** (e.g. issues of community concern as well as those priorities identified in the Corporate Plan and proposals within the Medium Term Financial Strategy)
- It should **prioritise topics** for scrutiny involvement that have most impact /benefit
- It should **involve local stakeholders**; e.g. local residents, community groups, Residents Associations, partners, businesses, and service users.
- It **should be flexible** to enable scrutiny to respond to new or urgent issues as they emerge.
- **Having a meaningful discussion** about the work programme probably works better than a complex set of feasibility criteria, which may be over-bureaucratic and resource intensive.

6. Components of a scrutiny work programme

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny has a number of distinct functions which provide a framework for the activities of local scrutiny bodies. An effective scrutiny work programme should aim to reflect a balance of these activities;

- **Holding the Executive to Account** – questioning the Leader and Cabinet Members on issues within their portfolio and through pre- and post-cabinet decision scrutiny. For example, the operation of ‘Call-in’ procedures and ensuring meaningful input into the development of business cases relating to decisions made by Council in February.
- **Policy Review and Development** – assisting Cabinet by undertaking strategic reviews to assess the effectiveness of existing policies or to inform the development of new strategies;
- **Performance Monitoring** – identifying services that are not performing, investigating and making recommendations for improvement;
- **External Scrutiny** – scrutinising and holding to account those partners and other local agencies which provide key services to the public;
- **Public and community engagement** – engaging and involving local communities in scrutiny activities and scrutinising those issues which are of concern to the local community.

6.2 In the context of these functions, and in accordance with the scrutiny protocol, a range of reports can be requested by scrutiny. Depending on the selected topic and the planned outcome, this could include:

- (i) Performance Reports;

- (ii) One off reports on matters of national or local interest or concern (e.g. Casey Report);
- (iii) Issues arising out of internal and external assessment (e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission);
- (iv) Reports on strategies and policies under development, or other issues on which the Cabinet or officers would like scrutiny views or support;
- (v) Progress reports on implementing previous scrutiny recommendations accepted by the Cabinet or appropriate Executive body.

6.3 In addition in-depth scrutiny reviews are an important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny work and provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate topics and to make improvements. Through the gathering and consideration of evidence from a wider range of sources, they enable more robust and effective challenge as well as an increased likelihood of delivering positive outcomes. In depth reviews should also help engage the public, and provide greater transparency and accountability. It is nevertheless important that there is a balance between depth and breadth of work undertaken so that resources can be used to their greatest effect.

7. Prioritising and selecting issues for scrutiny involvement

7.1 There are a number of practical criteria which are used to assist in the prioritisation and selection of scrutiny topics. Selected topics should:

- Compliment the priorities and work of the Council and its partners
- Not duplicate work being undertaken elsewhere by the Council and its partners;
- Reflect the concerns of the wider community;
- Be practical and demonstrate a positive and beneficial impact.

7.1 Throughout May and June consultation and engagement with local stakeholders took place to support the development of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. This included:

- Public Survey - local residents and community groups;
- Scrutiny Cafe – non executive members, local partners and senior officers;
- Informal meetings with Cabinet Member and Senior Officers;

7.2 These activities have been used to guide and inform the selection of work programme items for each scrutiny panel.

8. Work Programme Development

8.1 Public engagement and involvement is a key function of scrutiny and local residents and community groups are encouraged to participate in all aspects of scrutiny from the development of the work programme to participation in project work (e.g. providing service assessments / service user insights).

- 8.2 To ensure issues considered by scrutiny are both important and relevant to the local community, an online survey was distributed to local residents, community groups and other local stakeholders to assess their views. This was administered for a three week period from mid-May and generated approximately 60 individual qualitative responses.
- 8.2 Further to the completion of the survey, the Chairs of all scrutiny bodies have met with relevant Cabinet members and senior officers to further discuss issues arising from the survey.
- 8.3 From these activities, and work rolled over from last year, a summary of suggestions – attached at **Appendix A** – was prepared for the Scrutiny Cafe that took place on 15 June.
- 8.4 The aim of the Scrutiny Cafe was to bring together key local stakeholders (non executive members, partners and senior council officers) for round table discussions to further inform the development of the scrutiny work programme. Discussions were themed around the council's corporate priorities.
- 8.5 From this consultation a number of issues have been identified for inclusion in the panel's work programme for 2015/16. These are summarised below.

Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel – Possible Work Programme Areas for 2015/16

Priority 4 *Drive growth and employment from which everyone can benefit*

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe?	Comments
Regeneration Strategy (Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key area which could warrant further consideration is the need to balance provision for jobs with housing in local regeneration plans. It was felt that if left to market, new housing would always prevail, therefore what controls/tools are available to ensure balanced approach? • Another issue pressing issue was the need to deliver affordable housing and, more to the point, how to substantially increase the volume of house building to meet regional targets. Critical question would be how can the Council achieve this step-change? This would link to priority 5-1 – increasing supply of affordable homes. The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel report 'Role of Council in house building' may provide further guidance for any scrutiny involvement.
Unemployment	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was strong support for this among partners as this was noted to be a particular issue as there is a

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe?	Comments
and mental health (Priority)		<p>significant pool of undiagnosed mental health conditions which is a barrier to local people gaining employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers are also competing for same pots of inward investment and contacts in the same client pool, so more coordinated working is a key issue. • What role does the Jobs and Skills Board play in coordinating local partnerships? • Perceived to be a very fractured way in which local unemployed people are supported, and need to identify ways in which local unemployed can be supported in a more coordinated way. • There will be explicit recommendations from the scrutiny review of Job Support Market which may further inform any scrutiny involvement.
Community Infrastructure Levy	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 monies are reducing • New monies will come on-stream via CIL -10% to community, 25% if neighbourhood forum • A proportion of this money will be available for local neighbourhood schemes - what decision making structures should support allocations? • How best should the authority use CIL monies – e.g. as an enabling fund to secure larger regeneration resources? • What systems have other LA's established which could inform Haringey Planning service?
Welfare Reform (JSA, Council Tax and Housing Benefit) (Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that the cumulative impact of welfare reforms was throwing a number of residents in to financial crisis. This was having an impact on housing, homelessness and job seeking capabilities. • Partners agreed that this is a significant issue and that local residents needed help and support to navigate impact of welfare reforms. • Could also be linked to work programme issues within Priority 5 (housing and homelessness).
Post 16 education and training pathways (Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a particular concern for the borough. Why do most of young people access post 16 education institutions that are external to the borough? • What is missing from the post 16 skills landscape? • What barriers to people face in accessing the job market? • Access to quality ESOL?
Support to businesses	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should focus on what strategic support is being provided and this could be linked to any agreed work within the <i>regeneration strategy</i>.
Local High	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific area of concern to local members, particularly as empty shops were associated with low

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe?	Comments
Streets		<p>level ASB and general run down feeling to an area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some local high streets were doing better than others, and there would be some merit in identifying those factors underpinning successes which could be replicated. • This could also link to High St Champions (Portas) • Would any scrutiny involvement in this area duplicate any work undertaken by cabinet Adviser (Cllr Sahota)
Consultation and planning	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview & Scrutiny have already undertaken a piece of work in this area and are following up the recommendations of this report in the year ahead.
Apprenticeships	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged that the Council had begun an initiative here (100/100) and that the number of apprenticeships was increasing. • If there was an issue to look at, it would be the quality of apprenticeships that were on offer.
Universal Credit	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Credit is expected to be rolled out in March 2016. Job Centre plus are preparing for this, but will have broader repercussions in the council and other services.
Tottenham Regeneration	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a Corporate Programme and regular update will come to scrutiny. • How scrutiny can add value to this process?
Local Planning Guidelines	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny has already looked at how the community is engaged within local planning process. A further update is planned for 2015/16.
Physical / Social Regeneration	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Council balance social regeneration with economic regeneration? • More detail and focus would be needed to look at this area.
Access to GPs (new development)	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is firmly on the agenda for the Health & Well Being Board.
Development and green space	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that this was adequately considered in local development plans and there were appropriate safeguards. • Was also felt that this was not 'meaty' enough for scrutiny.
Empty Properties	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an empty properties programme which brings back in to use about 30-50 homes each year. • Scale of this problem in overall housing capacity

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe?	Comments
		issue is not significant.
Carbon reduction	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no direct suggestions for this within this priority. An annual report of all the work undertaken under the 40-20 umbrella is presented to Full Council (which may

Priority 5 *Create homes and communities where people choose to live and are able to thrive*

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe? Project?	Comments
Affordable Housing (High Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felt that this could be an in-depth review which should encompass all sectors What the council is doing at the moment and gaps in our current approach This should aim to assess how the Council can influence the market (what levers does the Council have) What can the Council do in response? This could incorporate issues of RHP nominations and bringing empty homes back into use. The review of the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel from 14/15 may inform this.
Private rented sector	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should look at housing quality. Feed into evidence gathering for the development of the private housing strategy e.g. scrutiny could help build evidence for this. Impact of overcrowding on families with children – something that the Children’s Panel may be interested in taking forward? What is the Council doing to enforce standards - this could link to joint enforcement work being undertaken within Environment & Community Safety panel.
Nominations – RHPs	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the context of welfare reform and impact on local residents, are RHPs cherry picking nominations? More detailed analysis required before further action.
Older people’s housing (Medium Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term piece of work focussed on researching what incentives and support older people need to enable downsizing (cross-tenure). Would involve an evidence session where older

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe? Project?	Comments
		<p>people/older people's groups give their views and experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted that the timing would need to fit in with a broader review on supported housing that is being completed (would need to take place soon).
Housing Unification and Improvement Programme	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a corporate programme and an update will be scheduled for the HRSP for 15/16.
Homelessness (Medium Priority)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence gathering session focussed on: Residents and partners experience of what works for different groups in terms of prevention/early intervention Gaps in our current offer Noted that there is the potential to add real value if this was used pre and post service transformation but that it would need to happen very quickly to fit in with timescales. There is an agreed visit to be scheduled to the Housing Options and Advice (Denise Gandy)
Council Tax and Housing Benefits	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term review of statistics regarding collection of arrears on Council Tax and our approach to enforcement. <u>No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers.</u>
Housing Repairs	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes for Haringey/ other RHPs This was felt to be a priority given the volume of member casework relating to HfH repairs; The tenant scrutiny panel have undertaken some work in this area and produced recommendations for improvement; <u>No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers.</u>
RHPs – multi-landlord estates	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are continuing problems on multi-landlord estates – responsibility for maintenance of common areas. Opportunities to synchronise and join up repairs and modernisation on - multi-landlord estates. <u>No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers</u>
Council housing	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to protect and expand provision rather than demolition and redevelopment. Linked to priority 5 (regeneration strategy) <u>No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers</u>

Suggestion	Yes? No? Maybe? Project?	Comments
Leaseholders	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contention about responsibilities of leaseholders and Homes for Haringey • How are leaseholders engaged, is there a fair process for resolving disputes? • No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers. • <u>No clear lead from Cafe - further discussion and follow up with Chair/ senior officers</u>

8.6 In addition, under agreed scrutiny protocols, Cabinet Members will be invited to attend relevant scrutiny panels twice each year to discuss issues within their portfolio area. The format of Cabinet Q and A is not prescribed and can be varied according to local agreement between the Chair and Cabinet member.

9. Monitoring

9.1 Once the work programme is agreed, there are both formal and informal systems in place to ensure effective monitoring of the work programme. Regular agenda planning meetings (with the Chair and senior officers) and discussion at Committee itself gives an opportunity to:

- Discuss the format, structure and priority of future items/meetings;
- Discuss the rules and procedures for formal meetings – ensuring clarity, consistency, and good time keeping;
- Discuss what other information is required, including the identification and of witnesses which may include external experts, service-users, community groups, amongst others;
- Consider options for getting out and about including site visits to other authorities and front-line service visits;
- Develop key lines of enquiry or a questioning strategy;
- Ensure the right people attend the right meetings at the right time;
- Follow up on any actions agreed, ensuring outcomes from recommendations;
- Consider member development needs to enable activities to be planned that take into consideration items included on the future work programme.

9.2 To assist in work programme development and monitoring, a new work programme template – attached at **Appendix B** - has been created to ensure the details and desired outcomes of items on the work programme can be kept under review.

- 9.3 In considering its future work plan, each scrutiny panel may wish to consider Haringey's Forward Plan. This provides 28 days notice of key decisions that the Cabinet is expected to take over the next three months, together with key decisions to be taken by individual Cabinet Members. The Forward Plan is updated and republished on a monthly basis and covers a period of three months.

10. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 10.1 The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this report and can confirm there are no direct financial implications. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

11. Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Legal Implications

- 11.1 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted on this report and can confirm there are no direct legal implications.
- 11.2 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions.
- 11.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

12. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 12.1 Overview and Scrutiny has a strong community engagement role and aims to regularly involve local stakeholders, including residents, in its work. It seeks to do this through:
- Helping to articulate the view of members of the local community and their representatives on issues of local concern.
 - Bringing local concerns to the attention of decision makers and incorporating them into policies and strategies.
 - Identifying and engaging with hard to reach groups.
 - Helping to develop consensus by seeking to reconcile differing views and developing a shared view of the way forward.
- 12.2 The evidence generated by scrutiny reviews / committee work helps to identify the kind of services wanted by local people. It also promotes openness and transparency as meetings are held in public and documents are available to local people.

13. Head of Procurement Comments

N/A

14. Policy Implication

- 14.1 There are no direct policy implications. However, this report sets out how the work of Overview and Scrutiny will contribute and add value to the work of the Council and its partners in meeting locally agreed priorities.

15. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Suggestions for Overview and Scrutiny (Scrutiny Cafe Booklet)

Appendix B – Future Work Programme Template

16. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985